

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02295 01 OF 02 171651Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12
HA-05 /093 W

-----072504 171741Z /46

O R 171611Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1349
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2295

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG, IS, XF
SUBJECT: PERES-SADAT MEETING IN SALZBURG

SUMMARY: LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN SHIMON PERES AND MK
MICHAEL HARISH BRIEFED EMBASSY OFFICERS ON THE PERES-
SADAT MEETING. THOUGH APPARENTLY MUCH OF THE MEETING
CENTERED ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND COMMUNICATION
PROBLEMS THE TWO SIDES HAVE IN TDEALING WITH EACH
OTHER, PERES SAID HE PROPOSED A COMPROMISE ON THE
SINAI AIRFIELDS ISSUE THAT WOULD HAVE ISRAEL EVACUATING
THEM FOLLOWING A PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH ALL ITS
NEIGBORS. HE ALSO HAS SOME IDEAS ON THE SINAI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 02295 01 OF 02 171651Z

SETTLEMENTS WHICH, HOWEVER, HE DID NOT SHARE WITH
US, INDICATING HE WOULD RASIE THEM AT THE PROPER
TIME. SADAT WAS CONCILIATORY ON THE PLO, DID NOT
FORECLOSE BORDER ADJUSTMENTS ON THE WEST BANK BUT SHARED NO
INTEREST IN A TERRITORIAL SWAP IN SINAI, AND INDICATED THAT A
BILATERAL AGREEMENT WAS STILL A POSSIBILITY. ALTHOUGH
PERES SAID HE WAS STILL HOPEFUL, HE HINTED THAT

BEGIN HAS DECIDED TO RETREAT TOWARD A HARDER LINE ON HIS SINAI PROPOSALS. PERES ALSO PRESENTED AN INTERESTING CHARACTER SKETCH OF SADAT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS THE EMBASSY WAS BRIEFED BY SHIMON PERES AND MK MICHAEL HARISH ON THE RECENT PERES-SADAT MEETING IN SALZBURG. HARISH, WHO ACCOMPANIED PERES ON HIS TRIP TO EUROPE, PROVIDED AN EMBOFF ON FEBRUARY 16 WITH THE BACKGROUND TO THE MEETING AS WELL AS MANY DETAILS OF THE CONVERSATION (MEMCON BEING POUCHED); AND IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE DCM ON FEBRUARY 17 PERES GAVE US A MORE COMPLETE RUNDOWN HIGHLIGHTED BY HIS PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF SADAT.

2. WHILE IN EUROPE TO ATTEND A VIENNA SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST, PERES HAD A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH SOCIALIST LEADERS IN SEVERAL WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS. AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR KREISKY, WHO HOSTED THE CONFERENCE, SUGGESTED PERES MEET WITH SADAT. AFTER A CHECK WITH BEGIN, WHO AGREED ON CONDITION PERES STEER CLEAR OF ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH SADAT, THE MEETING WAS ARRANGED WITH SALZBURG AS THE VENUE. ACCORDING TO HARISH THOSE PRESENT INCLUDED HIMSELF, THE TWO PRINCIPALS AND KREISKY.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 02295 01 OF 02 171651Z

3. SADAT TOLD PERES THAT HE ARRIVED DEPRESSED IN THE US ON HIS RECENT VISIT BUT LEFT ENCOURAGED. REFERRING TO THE REASON FOR HIS INITIATIVE LAST NOVEMBER, SADAT SAID THAT HE FELT THE PARTIES IN ARGUING OVER PROCEDURES FOR GENEVA WERE GETTING NOWHERE AND HE DECIDED THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR A REAL TRY FOR PEACE. HE THOUGHT HIS TRIP HAD CHANGED EVERYTHING BUT NOW SADLY REALIZED HE WAS MISTAKEN. HE BLAMED ISRAEL FOR FAILING TO CONSIDER EGYPT'S POINT OF VIEW. IN FACT, MUCH OF THEIR CONVERSATION DEALT WITH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS EGYPT AND ISRAEL HAVE IN DEALING WITH EACH OTHER. PERES COMMENTED SADLY ON THE MUTUAL BEGIN-SADAT MISUNDERSTANDINGS, EXEMPLIFIED BY DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT THE SETTLEMENTS AND DEMILITARIZING THE SINAI. HE EXPLAINED TO SADAT THAT IN ISRAELI EYES HIS OFFER OF RECOGNITION WAS NOT A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION, BECAUSE ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE IS A FACT. IN REPLY SADAT SPOKE OF THE PROFOUND MENTAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGE THE ACCEPTANCE OF ISRAEL MEANT IN ARAB ATTITUDES. PERES NOTED ISRAEL'S CONCERN

FOR LONG RANGE STABILITY IN THE AREA AND RESIDED THE
PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE OF THE HASHEMITE DYNASTY
AND WHAT HAPPENS AFTER SADAT.

4. PERES SAID THEY DISCUSSED THE THREE PRINCIPAL
BONES OF CONTENTION: AIRFIELDS, SETTLEMENTS AND THE
WEST BANK. PERES BROACHED THE IDEA OF AN ISRAELI
DECLARATION, WHICH WOULD NOT BE PART OF THE PEACE
TREATY, STIPULATING THE AIRFIELDS WOULD BE VACATED
FOLLOWING A SETTLEMENT WITH ALL ISRAEL'S ARAB NEIGHBORS.
PERES SAID HE WAS SPEAKING OF TWO AIRFIELDS. THE
THIRD ONE AT SHARM EL SHEIKH WOULD NOT BE A PROBLEM.
THOUGH HE HAD SAID AS MUCH PUBLICLY BEFORE HIS MEETING
WITH SADAT, HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE QUOTED AS HAVING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 TEL AV 02295 01 OF 02 171651Z

MENTIONED THIS TO SADAT. ON SINAI SETTLEMENTS PERES
SAID THAT HE SUPPORTS HIS GOVERNMENT'S POSITION, BUT
TOLD US HE HAS SOME IDEAS FOR A SOLUTION FOR SOLVING
THIS ISSUE WHICH HE IS KEEPING TO HIMSELF FOR THE
TIME BEING. HARISH TOLD US THAT PERES HAD RAISED THE
POSSIBILITY OF A TERRITORIAL SWAP, BUT THAT SADAT
APPEARED UNENTHUSIASTIC AND SUGGESTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS
ON THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS ISSUE BE LEFT FOR LATER.
HARISH HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT SADAT HAD NOT
SLAMMED THE DOOR ON THIS PROPOSAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02295 02 OF 02 171723Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12
HA-05 /093 W

-----073557 171740Z /46

O R 171611Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1350
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2295

5. PERES SAID THAT SADAT REQUIRES THE "RIGHT LANGUAGE" IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES REGARDING ISRAEL'S ULTIMATE INTENTIONS ON THE WEST BANK BEFORE HE CAN PROCEED. HE SAID THAT SADAT AGREES IN PRINCIPLE TO MINOR BORDER RECTIFICATIONS ON THE WEST BANK. HOWEVER, HE WILL NOT ENTERTAIN THEM IN SINAI. SINAI IS A DIFFERENT CASE BECAUSE THERE IS A RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER IN THIS AREA. SADAT SAID THAT EGYPT IS MAKING NO CLAIM TO GAZA; NOR DOES HE INSIST ON A PLO ROLE IN SOLVING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION. SADAT WANTED TO ASSURE ISRAEL THAT HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN HANDING OVER THE WEST BANK TO THE PLO AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED. ACCORDING TO HARISH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 02295 02 OF 02 171723Z

SADAT DID NOT SEEM TO BE FORECLOSING THE POSSIBILITY OF A BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL.

6. WHEN ASKED TO ASSESS SADAT AS A PERSON, PERES UNLEASHED A STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS-TYPE DESCRIPTION OF THE EGYPTIAN LEADER THAT REFLECTED PERES' INSIGHT AND POWERS OF OBSERVATION. HE SAID THAT OF THE TWO SINS IN JUDGING A MAN, OVER-ESTIMATION AND UNDER-ESTIMATION, HE WOULD NEVER COMMIT THE LATTER SIN CONCERNING SADAT. HE HAS SOME BIZARRE QUALITIES BUT AT THE SAME TIME WISDOM. HE IS CAPABLE OF SURPRISING BY UNEXPECTED MOVES AND ALSO BY HIS CUNNING. HOWEVER, PERES BELIEVES IN HIS SINCERITY. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT IF HANDLED PROPERLY SADAT CAN BE INFLUENCED? BUT EXTREME CARE MUST BE USED SINCE YOU CAN INSULT HIM WITHOUT REALIZING IT. PERES SEES IN SADAT SOME OF THE ELEMENTS OF A THINKER, A MAN OF SCIENCE AND A MAN OF OUR TIMES. HIS IDEAS COME BEFORE HIS ACTION. PERES ALSO THOUGHT THAT SADAT HAS A GREAT AWARENESS OF TIME; HE SEEMS TO BE IN A HURRY WITH ONE EYE, AS IT WERE, ALWAYS ON THE CALENDAR. HE HAS A TENDENCY TO BE SELF-RIGHTEOUS AND ALSO SUSPICIOUS. HE WANTS TO BE PART OF OUR CIVILIZATION

AND CONSIDERS HIMSELF TO BE A CREATOR. SADAT BELIEVES HE HAS INTRODUCED DEMOCRACY INTO EGYPT, AND HE FEELS THAT ALL EGYPT IS BEHIND HIM. HE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT 5 MILLION EGYPTIANS HAD COME OUT TO WELCOME HIM BACK FROM JERUSALEM. AT ONE POINT SADAT SAID ALL EGYPTIANS ARE FREE "EXCEPT ME". SADAT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE KEEN ON MEETINGS, BOTH BY INCLINATION AND CONVICTION. HE BELIEVES THAT HIS INITIATIVES WERE TRULY HISTORIC ACTS. SADAT HAS FIRM IMPRESSIONS OF ISRAELI LEADERS WHICH HE CONVEYED TO PERES BUT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 02295 02 OF 02 171723Z

WHICH PERES HESITATED TO SHARE WITH US. PERES DOES BELIEVE THAT SADAT, HOWEVER, HAS A REAL UNDERSTANDING OF ISRAEL'S POLITICAL DYNAMICS. IN AN ASIDE, PERES MENTIONED THAT HE WAS AT A GATHERING WITH EGYPTIAN POLITICAL PARTY OFFICIALS DURING HIS EUROPEAN TRIP AND WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THEY KNEW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT ISRAEL'S POLITICAL LIFE BUT BERY LITTLE ABOUT THE POLITICAL SITUATION ON THE WEST BANK OR IN LEBANON. PERES THOUGHT THAT SADAT AND EGYPTIANS IN GENERAL MISTAKE THE FORM OF DEMOCRACY FOR ITS CONTENT. FOR EXAMPLE, SADAT BELIEVES HE HAS DEMOCRACY IN EGYPT BECAUSE HE HAS PERMITTED POLITICAL PARTIES. HE APPARENTLY ASSUMES THAT ISRAEL'S DEMOCRACY WORKS THE SAME WAY. A DECISION IS MADE THAT THERE SHOULD BE A RIGHT-WING PARTY, A LEFT-WING PARTY AND A CENTER AND THE POLITICAL SCENE IS CARVED UP THAT WAY.

7. ASKED TO COMMENT ON POSSIBLE MODERATION IS ISRAEL'S SINAI PROPOSALS, PERES SAID GLUMLY THAT HE WOULD NOT COMMENT BECAUSE HE ALREADY KNOWS AND WOULD PREFER THAT WE HEAR IT FROM BEGIN. HE WOULD NOT DISCUSS THIS POINT FURTHER. PERES CONCLUDED BY SAYING THEE IS A GREAT DEAL OF BITTERNESS BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES AND THE NEGOTIATING PICTURE NOW IS ALMOST TOTAL CONFUSION. NONETHELESS HE REMAINS ULTIMATELY HOPEFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE. A SETTLEMENT IS "NOT IMPOSSIBLE."

8. HARISH TOLD US THAT SADAT INVITED PERES AND HIS WIFE TO VISIT EGYPT AT THE END OF APRIL TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN SOCIALISTS. PERES INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE VISITING THE US FOR 10 DAYS STARTING APRIL 7 AND ADDED THAT HE WILL PROBABLY ALSO GO TO ROMANIA SOON AT THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU.

9. COMMENT: PERES' POLISHED RECOUNTING OF HIS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 TEL AV 02295 02 OF 02 171723Z

MEETING WITH SADAT INDICATE IT WAS WELL-REHEARSED
AS A RESULT OF A NUMBER OF DEBRIEFING SESSIONS WITH
GOVERNMENT AND PARTY COLLEAGUES. DESPITE HIS
CONCLUDING WORDS OF HOPE HIS TONE WAS NOT REASSURING.
IN GENERAL, HE SPOKE LIKE A MAN WITNESSING AN
OPPORTUNITY SLIPPING AWAY.
LEWIS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV02295
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780074-0294
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780238/aaaabgms.tel
Line Count: 289
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: eef607d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3551893
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PERES-SADAT MEETING IN SALZBURG SUMMARY: LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN SHIMON PERES AND MK MICHAEL HARISH BRIEFED EMBASSY OFFICERS ON THE PER
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, EG, IS, XF, (PERES, SHIMON), (SADAT, ANWAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/eef607d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014